

App. No. 09/694,625
Office Action Dated April 18, 2005

REMARKS

Favorable reconsideration of this application is requested in view of the above amendments and the following remarks. Claims 1 and 35 are hereby amended. Claims 11 and 45 are canceled without prejudice or disclaimer.

The amendments of claims 1 and 35 are supported by the subject matter of claims 11 and 45, respectively.

Claim 35 was objected to for an informality. The claim is amended to address the concerns of the Examiner. Favorable reconsideration of claim 35 is requested.

Claims 1-4, 7, and 8 were rejected as being unpatentable over Yasuda (US 6,221,455) in view of Hasman (US 5,526,338). Applicants traverse this rejection. Claim 1 includes allowable subject matter of claim 11, thereby rendering the rejection moot. Applicants are not conceding the correctness of the rejection as applied to the rejected claims. Favorable reconsideration of claims 1-4, 7, and 8 is requested.

Claim 5 was rejected as being unpatentable over Yasuda, in view of Hasman, and further in view of Welch (US 5,384,797). Applicants traverse this rejection. Claim 5 should be reconsidered allowable for at least the same reasons as claim 1, from which it depends. Applicants are not conceding the correctness of the rejection as applied to the rejected claim. Favorable reconsideration of claim 5 is requested.

Claim 6 was rejected as being unpatentable over Yasuda, in view of Hasman, and further in view of Imaino (US 5,555,537). Applicants traverse this rejection. Claim 6 should be reconsidered allowable for at least the same reasons as claim 1, from which it depends. Applicants are not conceding the correctness of the rejection as applied to the rejected claim. Favorable reconsideration of claim 6 is requested.

Claim 9 was rejected as being unpatentable over Yasuda, in view of Hasman, and further in view of Akahira (US 5,527,661). Applicants traverse this rejection. Claim 9 should be

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reconsidered allowable for at least the same reasons as claim 1, from which it depends.

Applicants are not conceding the correctness of the rejection as applied to the rejected claim.

Favorable reconsideration of claim 9 is requested.

Claims 35-39, 41, 42, and 46 were rejected as being unpatentable over Yasuda, in view of Hasman, and further in view of Welch. Applicants traverse this rejection. Claim 35 is amended to include allowable subject matter of claim 45, thereby rendering the rejection moot. Applicants are not conceding the correctness of the rejection as applied to the rejected claims. Favorable reconsideration of claims 35-39, 41, 42, and 46 is requested.

Claim 40 was rejected as being unpatentable over Yasuda, in view of Hasman, further in view of Welch, and in further view of Imaino. Claim 40 should be reconsidered allowable for at least the same reasons as claim 35, from which it depends. Applicants are not conceding the correctness of the rejection as applied to the rejected claim. Favorable reconsideration of claim 40 is requested.

Claim 43 was rejected as being unpatentable over Yasuda, in view of Hasman, further in view of Welch, and in further view of Akahira. Claim 43 should be reconsidered allowable for at least the same reasons as claim 35, from which it depends. Applicants are not conceding the correctness of the rejection as applied to the rejected claim. Favorable reconsideration of claim 43 is requested.

Claims 47-49 were rejected as being unpatentable over Yasuda, in view of Hasman, further in view of Welch, and in further view of Takeuchi (US 6,424,608). Claims 47-49 should be reconsidered allowable for at least the same reasons as claim 35, from which they depend. Applicants are not conceding the correctness of the rejection as applied to the rejected claims. Favorable reconsideration of claims 47-49 is requested.

Claims 47, 49, and 50 were rejected as being unpatentable over Yasuda, in view of Hasman, further in view of Welch, and in further view of Ojima (US 4,908,813). Claims 47, 49, and 50 should be reconsidered allowable for at least the same reasons as claim 35, from which

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they depend. Applicants are not conceding the correctness of the rejection as applied to the rejected claims. Favorable reconsideration of claims 47, 49, and 50 is requested.

In view of the above, favorable reconsideration in the form of a notice of allowance is requested. Any questions regarding this communication can be directed to the undersigned attorney, Douglas P. Mueller, Reg. No. 30,300, at (612)455-3804.

Dated: July 15, 2005



DPM:mfe

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Douglas P. Mueller". The signature is written over a horizontal line.

Douglas P. Mueller
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